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Human Rights Committee

Ninety-fifth session

Summary record of the 2626th meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Friday, 3 April 2009, at 10 a.m.

Chairperson: Mr. Iwasawa

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The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Organizational and other matters (*continued*)

Announcement of Bureau decisions

1. **The Chairperson** announced the status of the communications considered under the Optional Protocol as at the end of the current session. The Committee had declared two communications admissible and six inadmissible; it had found violations of the Covenant in 19 cases and had decided to discontinue consideration of three communications. He regretted that, owing to the late arrival of the delegation of Chad, it had not been possible for the Committee to consider the report of that country. However, as a consequence, the Committee had had additional time to address the existing backlog of communications.

2. Mr. Rivas Posada and Ms. Motoc had been nominated to represent the Committee at the Inter-Committee Meeting of the Human Rights Treaty Bodies in 2009; the Chairperson and Sir Nigel Rodley, in his capacity as Vice-Chairperson, had been nominated in October 2008 to represent the Committee in its dealings with the media; Ms. Majodina, in her capacity as Vice-Chairperson, had been nominated to represent the Committee at the Durban Review Conference in April 2009; Ms. Keller had been nominated to deal with the revised reporting guidelines; and Mr. O'Flaherty had been nominated as the Rapporteur for revised general comment No. 34. The Committee would make a decision on its vacant positions at its ninety-sixth session to be held in Geneva in July. He intended to hold consultations with Committee members in that regard prior to the session.

3. At the next session, the Committee intended to consider the reports of Azerbaijan, Chad, the Netherlands and the United Republic of Tanzania. It also planned to review country situations in the absence of reports. The lists of issues for Argentina, Ecuador, Mexico, New Zealand and Uzbekistan would also be finalized at that session.

4. He noted that two members had been unable to attend the current session in New York, thus making it more difficult than usual to ensure the presence of the 12 members necessary to ensure a quorum so that the Committee could accomplish its important work. In that respect, he emphasized the importance of regular and timely attendance by all members of the Committee and asked what more could be done to ensure the achievement of a quorum in the future.

5. **Mr. Thelin** suggested that the Bureau might introduce a moderate, albeit symbolic, penalty for non-attendance without due notification or explanation.

Closure of the session

6. **Mr. Thelin** commended the Secretariat and the Committee leadership for organizing a day of preparatory work that had enabled new members to gain a better understanding of the Committee's work.

7. **Mr. Amor**, supported by **Sir Nigel Rodley**, emphasized that the Committee must not lose sight of its traditional commitment to the adoption of decisions by consensus. Points of view should therefore not be imposed on Committee members and Committee decisions should be based on compromises agreed in a spirit of mutual respect. For the sake of the credibility of the Committee, all members should be allowed to express their opinions freely, including when they were in the minority on a given issue. The neutrality of the secretariat must also be maintained. He urged the Committee to make a greater effort in future to achieve consensus in a transparent and amicable manner.

8. . **The Chairperson** said that he intended to pursue decisions based on consensus, as far as possible. In that connection, he drew attention to rule 51 of the Committee's rules of procedure and the footnote to that rule.

9. After the customary exchange of courtesies, **the Chairperson** declared that the Human Rights Committee had completed its work for the ninety-fifth session.

The meeting rose at 10.45 a.m.